

**CAPITOL/DOWNTOWN  
CENTRAL CORRIDOR TASK FORCE  
DECEMBER 5, 2006**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Task Force**

**Members Present:** Ta-coumba Aiken, Michael Burns, Larry Englund, Kim Hyers, Craig Lien, Paul Mohrbacher, Deborah Rathman, Steve Schmidt, Kristina Smitten, Diane Thormodsgard

**Task Force**

**Members Absent:** John Bennett, Jerry Hersman, David Lanegran, Rhys Ledger, Pat Lamb, Phil Mason, Susan Rani, Jose Gonzalez, Michael Noble

**Guests Present:** Jim Barton, Karen Lyons, Karri Plowman, Mark Voerding

**Staff Present:** Jess Rosenfeld, Lucy Thompson

**Welcome and Introductions**

Co-chair Kristina Smitten welcomed task force members, who introduced themselves. Guests were also introduced.

**Review of Agenda**

The agenda was approved as written.

**Review of Meeting Notes from November 14, 2006**

The notes for both meetings were approved as written.

**Discussion of Key Redevelopment Sites**

Before the task force addressed particular redevelopment sites, Lucy Thompson reviewed a list of questions to help the task force think about the possibilities of each site. Kristina Smitten asked for general thoughts from the task force on the work Urban Strategies has done so far, beginning with the Sears site.

**Sears**

- It is important to make sure that development on the Sears site is connected to downtown Saint Paul and not just the light rail line, perhaps by improving non-motorized transportation connections (especially the connection across 94).
- The extension of Western Sculpture Park through the Sears site is a good idea.
- Significant development at the Sears site should be good for the surrounding neighborhood, but it will be important to consider issues of displacement and ways to ensure housing affordability.
- More neighborhood-scale streets should go all the way through the site from Rice to Marion. Some streets could convert between primarily auto and pedestrian uses.
- The massing and heights shown in the model are generally fine. A range of heights is good, and the location of the towers makes sense.
- Could a tower be introduced on the southeast corner of Rice and University?

#### League of Minnesota Cities block

- The transition to the neighborhood to the north of the site is good.
- This site is a gateway to University Ave., the Capitol, and downtown. It should be something special.
- There is no green on the north side of University here. Can green pockets be introduced through building setbacks (which would also serve to add interest to the street wall)?
- North/south access through the block isn't very important, but any throughways (like to parking) should be safe and secure.
- The block should have a mix of commercial and residential uses.

Before the task force began discussing other downtown redevelopment sites, Craig Lien brought up the issue of station location. He proposed moving the station at 10<sup>th</sup> Street a few blocks south to draw state employees into the core of downtown. The task force was generally in favor of moving the 10<sup>th</sup> Street station to 7<sup>th</sup> Street and combining the stations at Robert Street and at 6<sup>th</sup> Street into a single station at Cedar and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Larry Englund reminded the task force that the benefits of moving the 10<sup>th</sup> Street station should be weighed against the needs of downtown Saint Paul residents.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar

- Any redevelopment of the site should be architecturally significant and striking, inside and out.
- A tower would be appropriate for the site, as long as it doesn't block out the "1" on the First Bank Building.
- Activity on the block is important, so a multi-use building would be ideal (perhaps some combination of office, hotel, and residential uses).
- If an LRT stop is incorporated into the block, there could be an indoor public plaza. Models from other cities (like San Diego) should be explored.
- The Athletic Club building does not necessarily need to be preserved.

#### Union Depot (Diamond Products)

This item was postponed to the December 19, 2006 meeting.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m. The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 19, 2006, 4:30-6:30 p.m. in the 13th Floor Conference Room of City Hall Annex (25 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St.). Next month's meetings will be held on January 9 and January 25, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Jess Rosenfeld  
City Planner  
December 6, 2006